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Church gets grant to aid rebirth of historic area

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STAFF WRITER

TRENTON -- A development organization affiliated with Shiloh Baptist Church has been awarded a grant of \$85,000 to survey Calhoun Street area residents as it prepares to boost neighborhood revitalization in the district.

The Wachovia Regional Foundation announced the planning grant for the Trenton Historic Development Collaborative (THDC) at an event yesterday attended by Mayor Douglas Palmer and local business people at the Calhoun Street church.

After the event, Galen Williams of Isles Inc., which is assisting the THDC, said the organizations want to revisit and prioritize previous development plans for the area.

"What we hope to do in this year-long process is coordinate and consolidate those plans, and we'll do that through community meetings and surveys of the neighborhood," he said.

The groups will then apply for a \$750,000 implementation grant from the Wachovia Regional Foundation to move ahead with the top-priority plans, Williams said.

The planning area encompasses a section of the city defined by Rutherford, Bellevue and Hermitage avenues, West State and Willow streets, and the D&R Canal, he said.

Palmer said a range of projects could get a boost in the process, including some that would extend capital-area development into the neighborhoods.

"There will be more investment in structures, in housing rehabilitation and in open space, as well as development of a business and commercial corridor and use of surface parking lots on Willow and Hanover streets," Palmer said.

He said future efforts would tie into current developments including Tara Development's housing projects on the former Magic Marker site and on Spring and Passaic streets, the Canal Banks redevelopment effort and projects on North Broad Street and Brunswick Avenue.

THDC's new plan will also focus on social and human services needs so it can address challenges such as crime, health, community cohesiveness and the local economy, the group said in a press release.

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